**Guidance for Volunteers working with children and young people (under 18s)**

Whilst volunteering with the Harris, you may sign up to challenges that require working with children and young people. The following guidance aims to outline clear boundaries to help you feel more comfortable in your volunteering role. This guidance has been created to ensure that the way we are working keeps children and young people safe and protects our volunteers.

The information below is in line with Preston City Council policies and procedures.

**Good practice:**

* Use your common sense to judge whether a situation is appropriate or not.
* Be clear about your role.

-As a Harris volunteer, you are not a child’s or young person’s carer. Ask the parent/carer/guardian for help if it’s needed.

* If you have any concerns that a child or young person may be at risk of harm, you must share and report these concerns to the member of staff leading your volunteering project as soon as you can.
* If a child or young person makes a disclosure to you in confidence:

-Stay calm

-Reassure them it is not their fault, listen to them fully, and take what they say seriously.

- Don't promise confidentiality – never agree to keep a secret. You have a duty to report your concerns. Tell the child or young person that you will need to tell someone, but only someone whose job it is to protect them.

-Make a note of what has been said, heard or seen as soon as possible afterwards. Do this away from the child or young person and not whilst they are talking.

* Refresh your memory on the reporting procedure. (This can be found in the Preston City Council Safeguarding Policy)

**Things to avoid:**

* We advise you to avoid physical contact with children, unless a parent/guardian has given you consent.
* Doing anything of a personal nature for a child that they can do for themselves/their guardian can do for them. E.g. assisting with toilet visits, cleaning faces/hands.
* Spending excessive time alone with children away from others. If you find yourself in a position where you could be on your own with a child, try to put yourself back into a group situation straight away.

-E.g. If a child asked you to take them to the toilet, you should get the parents’ attention instead.

*Who to contact if you have any concerns or questions regarding safeguarding:*

**Communities & Volunteers Officer: Kyra Milnes**

Office: 01772 905412

Email: k.milnes@preston.gov.uk

**Communities Assistant: Amelia Welbourne**

Office: 01772 906505

Email: a.welbourne@preston.gov.uk

You can also contact:

**Preston City Council Designated Safeguarding Officer: Liz Mossop**

Office: 01772 906419

Email: l.mossop@preston.gov.uk

If you’d like more information, you’re welcome to pop into the Guild Hall office any time to speak to a member of staff or read through the Preston City Council Safeguarding Policy. Equally, you can view the Council’s Policy online:

[Safeguarding Policy 2021 (preston.gov.uk)](https://www.preston.gov.uk/media/9255/Safeguarding-Policy-2021/pdf/Safeguarding_Policy_August_2021.pdf?m=637733613001870000)